

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

to the California Medical Association



Health Careers

LET'S TAKE a hard look at the Health Careers numbers game. Between 1950 and 1965 the number of physicians engaged in the active practice of medicine in the United States increased 19 per cent, but the population increased 28 per cent. In 1950 the ratio was one physician to 974 persons, in 1965 it was one to 1,051.

There are 621,000 registered nurses (RN) now engaged in their profession in the United States—yet 21 per cent of hospital positions are unfilled, and many hospitals have closed some of their wards or in some places have substituted trained aides for RNs. Fifty thousand RNs are needed to fill positions now vacant. It is estimated we will need 850,000 by 1970, an increase of 229,000 in the next three years. We now have 19,500 nurse educators, and it is estimated we will need 10,500 more in three years just to *train* the needed nurses.

By 1970 the health career field will be the largest single field of occupation in the United States. Just as business, industry, science, the arts and the professions urge students to enter these fields of endeavor and depict attractively the returns connected with them, we must urge youth to enter a health career.

Your Woman's Auxiliary is aware of the problems facing Medicine; more important, we have been doing something about them. Every organized County Auxiliary in California has an active health career program. When an organization has 9,200 intelligent, determined women seeking the means to an end, it is a cogent force, indeed.

This past year we collected, through fund-raising efforts, over \$82,400 for scholarships and loans. This brings the grand total over the years in California to almost two million dollars. More

than a thousand students have been added to the health career team in the past four years by your Auxiliary's scholarships and loans.

This past year we sponsored 340 Health Career and Future Nurse Clubs in High Schools throughout the state. Twenty-eight counties had a Health Career Conference, reaching more than a hundred thousand people.

Our members spoke in schools, at PTA meetings, women's clubs, youth groups, for the press, radio and television. We sponsored spot ads for Health Careers on radio stations. We supplied pamphlets, books, charts, posters, pins and films.

We have many other activities which relate to Health Careers. These include various community service projects: sponsoring hospital auxiliaries, Candy-Striper* units for boys and girls 16 and over; and for younger boys and girls we have similar groups called the Band-Aids. We teach a comprehensive baby-sitting course. We sponsor medical self-help courses. We have legislative committees that are concerned with health bills on the state and national level. We have a rural health program to interest rural youth in health careers (through programs at 4-H, Future Farmers of America and booths at county fairs). We maintain a liaison with the Woman's Auxiliary to the Student American Medical Association to help recruit young physicians for rural areas. (Be apprised, by the way, that we find it more effective to convince the wife first!). We have baby-sitting services for women who want to study a health career but have a family at home.

We have sponsored glaucoma clinics, poliomyelitis clinics, tetanus clinics. We provide Meals on Wheels to the homebound. We collect drugs for needy hospitals overseas.

*The name comes from the candy-striped uniforms that many of the girls wear.

One County Auxiliary sponsored a medical secretarial course in the high school and purchased the dictaphone for class use. We organize Block Mothers for disaster preparedness, sponsor Homemaker Health Aide Service to release hospital and nursing home beds where possible, and train Volunteer Friendly Visitors to relieve loneliness of both patient and volunteer. We have just added a School Health Committee, whose chairman is an Auxiliary member who is also an M.D. While the function of this committee is primarily education and prevention, by its very nature it will stimulate interest in health careers at the elementary and junior high level.

Your Auxiliary has been interested in Health Careers for almost 40 years. For the last 15 years

our program has been primarily aimed at recruitment, first for medicine and nursing and then for all health careers. We believe that we contributed substantially to the 50 per cent increase in recruitment in that span.

We are setting up programs to reach people of many orders and all ages—adults who have been trained but who have not been active in the recent past, returning military personnel, retired workers, persons who have been “automated” out of jobs, housewives, others. A special 9,200 doctors of medicine in California whose wives contributed to this labor of love, can look on this record with personal pride. I hope you are one of that number.

MRS. JOHN FITTIPOLDI, JR.
Health Careers Chairman

